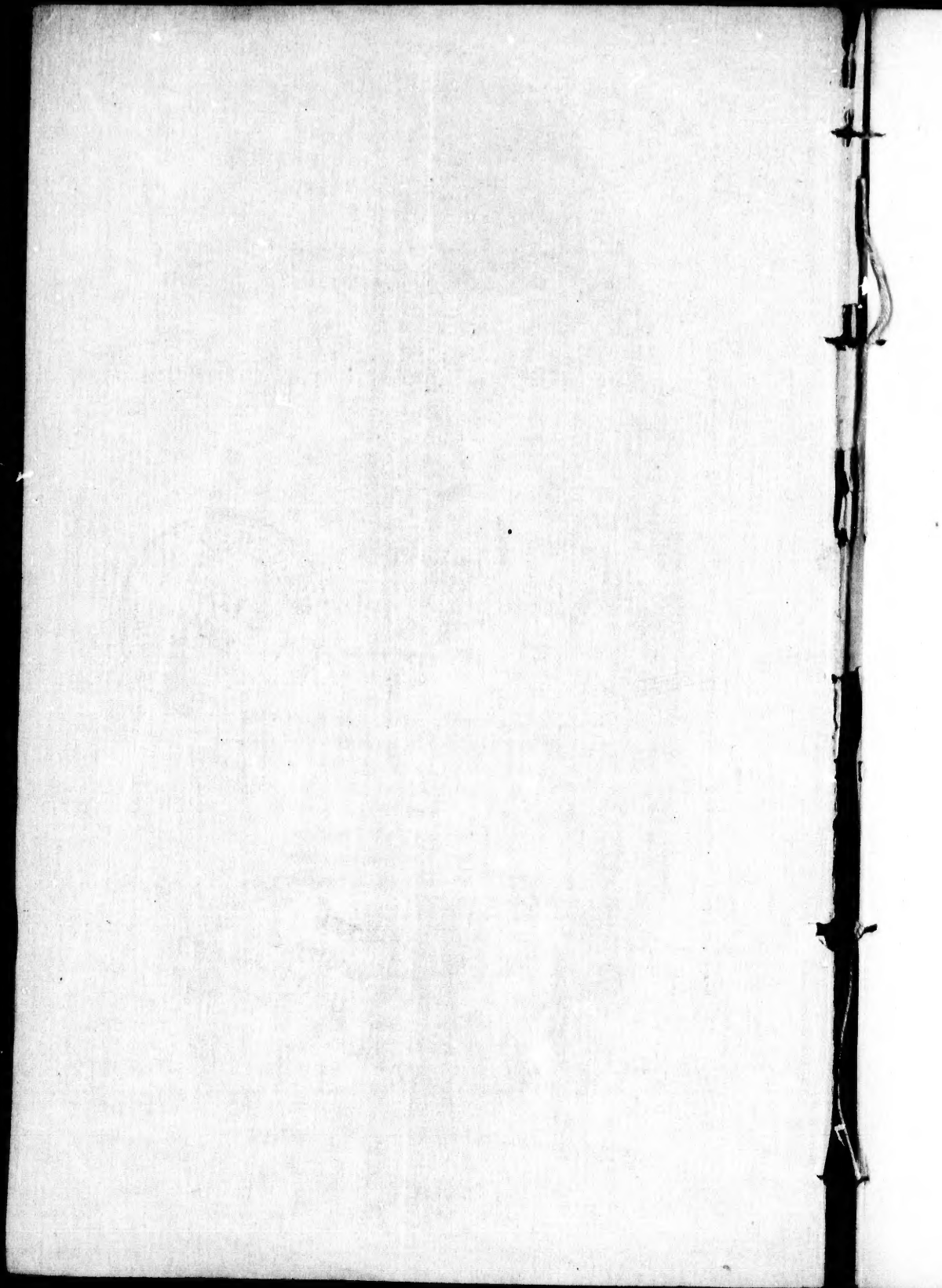


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View of the Chaudière Islands, and Manufacturing Establishments, at the City of Ottawa, from an Ambrotype by Lockwood, taken from the Barrack Hill.







The Carrier's Offerings



PART I.

SCENES IN INDIA.

I.

Once more before you stands the Carrier-boy,
Freighted with the quintessence of the year,
With Death's blue lights, and Life's bouquets of joy,
And signs and wonders gathered far and near,
Enough to satisfy, but not to cloy
The meditative mind and gentle ear ;
A Panoramic sett of tableaux showing
How this old whirligig, the Earth, is going

II.

No easy task, so various are her phases,
Some comic and some tragic : here you see
How crinoline expands to swell your praises :
How politicians and the truth agree ;
And there how war, like Satan's kitchen blazes,
Extinguished only by a crimson sea,
Which, if you follow, I will now explain—
Up with the curtain, and let order reign.

III.

There rides upon the bosom of the wind
 That billows from the East a fearful wail,
 And on the crescent of the sky, behind
 We trace the windings of a gory trail ;
 So must I show how men with hell combined
 Turn the meek heavens sorrowful and pale ;
 Yet need I, Anglo-Saxon, utter more
 Than Nena Sahib, devil! and Cawnpore.

IV.

Look on that land, the birth-place of the sun,
 From Madras to Lahore, and from the feet
 Of Mount Djawhar westward to Puttun ;
 And see in many a jungle, house, and street,
 What deeds the dusky miscreants have done ;
 How many English hearts have ceased to beat,—
 The infant's and the mother's! Pagan brutes,—
 In blood you sowed, in blood now reap the fruits!

V.

O that my words were swords, and each endowed
 With life, and lightening speed to fly and strike
 The woman-murdering, baby-burning crowd,
 To cleave them and annihilate them quite ;
 Nor need I blush to parody aloud
 The Roman's* wish,—our heart-pangs make it right.
 That the whole Sepoy race had but one neck—
 That I might break it at a single thwack!

VI.

Look at those boats that bear away the few,
 Whom gallant Wheeler saved from day to day,
 Till close and closer still around him drew
 The living wall of Nana's fierce array ;
 And then they promised, Nana and his crew,
 That those in safety should be borne away.
 You see how faithfully he kept his word,—
 Faithful as serpent that has charmed the bird.

*Caligula.

VII.

Along the Ganges' bank their rifles blaze,
And children and their mothers leap in air ;
Husbands and brothers, it is vain to raise
Your hands and voices—mercy dwells not there.
Sad is the nightfall of your golden days,
More sad that death is mated with despair ;
But the fair forms that 'scape that storm of fire,
O how will they survive, and how expire ?

VIII.

How they survived, let it be draped in tears !
And how they died, it is too much to tell !
But in the voices of the coming years
A shuddering sound will syllable, *The Well !!!*
And send its echo to the upper spheres.
Ye who can brook to guess at what befel,
Look down, look only once, and gather there
How perished wife, and child, and maiden fair.

IX.

But Naaa's ruffians, some at least have rued
That Bramah* ever made them ; siezed and bound
To the hot cannon's mouth (a fate too good) ;
Their black hearts blown away have licked the ground.
And famished jackals have been furnished food
From odds and ends that could not all be found.
Such is the dreadful warning must be shown.
To those whose gods are cattle, wood, and stone

X.

But turn we now unto a fairer scene,
The leaguered walls of Delhi,—ha ! ha ! here
The Scottish sabre is descending keen ;
And Erin's shout, and England's hearty cheer
Tell what the throbs of hallowed vengeance mean,—
Tell that the end of treachery is near,—
Tell that the name of Briton withers never,
But blossoms out in every zone for ever.

* The creating Deity of Hindoo Mythology.

XI.

See how the siege progressed, its daring few,
 Assailed by frequent sorties, ten to one,
 Drove back within their walls the craven crew,
 And forward urged the skill-conducted plan—
 Till came the hour, to God and woman due !
 When through the ranks a joyful murmur ran,—
 To-day we storm their gates, the train ! the train !
 And fierce Impatience stamped upon the plain.

XII.

See those brave men,—immortal be their names,
 Bearing the powder-bags to that huge gate,
 Through which is pointed scores of deadly aims ;
 But spite of all, those iron mouths of fate,
 They place the powder,—fall ! and instant flames,
 And shock, and roar, and struggle desperate,
 Trouble the heavens : Burgess,* let thy soul
 With brave Carmichael's,* view the torrent roll.

XIII.

Right through the Cashmere gate, now blown away—
 The steely tempest drives ; and far along
 With lion-roar, the Briton holds his way,
 O'er ramparts, blazing bastions, and among
 The routed devils, flying from his sway,
 And begging Vishnu† with a bitter song.
 They'd shown no mercy, and no mercy found,
 But reeled to earth with many a purple wound.

XIV.

Yet see, amid the carnage and the strife,
 The Briton's sign of nobleness prevailed ;
 Sacred is held the honor and the life
 Of woman, and of child ; though *his* had wailed.
 And shuddered down to night beneath the knife
 Of their accursed kin,—with plaudits hailed.
 Thus be it ever ; let man war with man ;
 But spare *her* veins from the inhuman plan.

* These two intrepid heroes fell " riddled with balls " in the execution of the task described.

† The preserving and pervading Deity of the Hindoos.

OTTAWA CITIZEN.

XV.

The swift of foot, with terror in their eyes,
Hold to the east, and o'er the Jumna stream
Carry the shame of Delhi's dread surprise,
To those who still of Pagan conquest dream ;
Pursued, their King is captured,—suppliant sighs,
With ashen lips, he urges for the gleam
Of mean existence, urges, and is heard,
Though guilty, not the worst, and age is spared.

XVI

A tear for all who 'neath that burning sky,
With gallant Nicholson* in battle fell ;
Beauty and Valor linked will often sigh
O'er the white monuments, that soon will tell
Where they in honor's shroud for ever lie,
Heedless of marriage chime or funeral knell.
Their Country grieves, the World's great heart is sore,
And sobs beneath the stars ; their march is o'er !

XVII

Meantime, great Havelock's Highland *chiefs* advance,
Through the fierce plains of Oude ; on every hand
He sees the swarming natives round him dance,
Threat'ning destruction to his fearless band.
But on he leads them,—victory in his glance,
Till front of bleeding Lucknow's face they stand,
Just in the nick of time, reporters say,
Defences ready to be blown away.

XVIII.

O blest relief ! O what a joyful shock,
Shook the faint watchers who had looked for aid
Through desperate weeks, which nearly seemed to mock
The hero's hope, and trust of those who prayed—
The angel weepers, leaning on the rock
Of Him who called to Peter when afraid,
Walking upon the waters ;—Woman fair,
God and his upper angels heard you there.

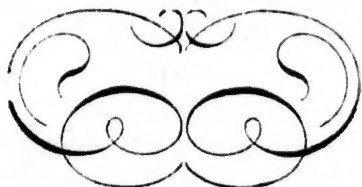
* General Nicholson while scaling the walls of Delhi, fell under the fire of the enemy, and has since died of his wounds.

XIX.

Many, O many places still remain,
Agra, and Futtyghur, and Dinapore,
Where blood of innocents and mothers slain,
Dye the white walls and lintels of the door.
But here meek Sympathy recoils in pain,
With pallette and her brush, she can no more ;
Appalled and shocked, she sickens at the view,
And turns, my happy country, turns to you.

XX

Leave we the tiger's home, and hitherward,
Like the advancing sun, salute the West ;
Europe has nought just now to claim regard ;
For there the Dove of Peace still keeps her nest.
Though long-faced prose declares that times are hard,
So here at length our weary eyes may rest
On the globe's evening disc, which as he reckoned,
Brings the pleased Carrier round to *Section Second*





PART II.

UNITED STATES AND CANADA.



I.

The red-faced sun comes staggering up the east,
Like a sea-captain drunk ; 'tis New-year's day,
And though the cold and taxes have increased,
And creditors declare they can't delay,
We'll have our fling, and spread the generous feast,
And give our thoughts,—poor slaves, an hour of play.
Hark to the merry bells and skater's shout :
The dog barks joyous for the young are out.

II.

'Tis wise to cast our dusty cares behind,
And let the forge of our ambition cool,
And look abroad with an expanded mind,
And take fresh lessons out of Nature's School ;
For Art is narrow, selfishness is blind,
And these two juggling prophets seek to rule
The brooding world ; but she on full-grown wing,
Will yet to a new love's empyrean spring.

III.

Away with croaking, 'tis a day of cheer,
And blessings thick as martin birds in June,
Are perching '57 on thy bier,
And chant thy epicedium in a tune,
Consoling to thy young successor's ear ;
We lay thee decently beneath the moon,
And like some widows, beautifully bold,
Dance on your grave before your shins are cold.

IV.

But let us ponder how the great world wags,
A portion we have seen, and now review
The land where Jonathan on tiptoe brags
That he can "lick creation" black and blue.
Your Carrier-bard his pardon humbly begs,
And would suggest the boast may all be true ;
But in such case the transcendental elf
Must *whip*—as he is doing now—*himself*.

V.

Far from the friendly line that doth divide
The beaver's from the eagle's home, we see
How Mormon Saints the *stars* and *stripes* deride,
And hold that they of sovereign right are free,
With fifty handsome wives to walk or ride,
And multiply by Brigham Young's decree ;
And Elder Knapp has made them swear, *by Joe*,
That they shall die or flog the *heathen* foe.

VI.

So Utah pipes ; and Kansas still remains
Uncertain, how the scale of fate may turn ;
Whether her youthful limbs in southern chains
Through a long night of slavery shall burn ;
Or like the wind upon her sunny plains,
Unmanacled, for ever nobly spurn
The tyrant's offer, and the traitor's sham,
Free from the curse which Rabbins trace to Ham.

VII.

But though alarm is muttering here and there
Around our continent, the song of peace
warbled on *our* hearths and in the air,
And from the honest husbandman's increase—
The earth, o'er-burdened, sweats, and everywhere
Our country's children hold a precious lease
On the bright future ; therefore do I say,
Shout till you're hoarse, my boys ! shout all to-day.

VIII.

Some hold that Ottawa, St. Lawrence some,
Shall be the pet of Commerce yet unborn ;
And rival sections, each holds up his thumb
And laughs his honest neighbor into scorn.
Even I, in such a case would not be dumb,
But time forbids to blow my partial horn,
And whether this or that great plan succeed,
We know our country glory-ward shall speed.

IX.

With nerves of wire, strange mediums of thought,
And rails that vibrate to the frantic tread
Of firey dragons, hunted down and caught,
And by the hand of Science tamely led
And harnessed to those painted mansions, fraught
With life and beauty, (item, gingerbread !)
All these with fleets upon her lakes and streams
Are raw material for a Poet's dreams.

X.

But to the Lumberman wide praise is due,
No isolated, petty power is he ;
His strength is normal, circulating through
The Body Politic, and long shall be,
As it hath been since sailed Champlain's canoe,
Acknowledged great from Huron to the sea ;
The Farmer's Pioneer, he boldly leads,
And hungry Commerce on his bounty feeds.

XI.

Whether in winter glooms with sounding stroke,
Far above Allumet, he fells the pine,
Or hews at Mattawan the giant oak ;
Or near the Turtle Lakes, his utmost line,
Shakes the tall Elm till in her ermine cloak,
She thunders down in snow-smoke, sparkling fine ;
In every place he cheers the houseless wood,
Sublime in hardship ! lord of Solitude !

XII.

His heart is fearless as his arm is strong.
And on the river bank I've often stood,
Where Chaudiere Rapid roars his drunken song,
And watched him fighting with the wrathful flood,
Steering his *crib* with skilful art along,
Till down the Slide its journey it pursued,
Or wrecked amid the whirl of torturing shocks,
Crowned the bald foreheads of imperial rocks.

XIII.

No dandy's life is his : on yonder lake—
That bears St. Peter's name, (and must be meant
To point the hour when, for his Master's sake,
The rude Disciple, with a furious bent,
Drew his hot sword, resolved at once to take
A life, or lop the ear of miscreant),
On that dark lake of storms, behold again
The leading raftman shouting to his men.

XIV.

Onward Improvement treads. Few years ago,
A chief of the Algonquins passed at dawn,
With knife, and tomahawk, and painted bow,
Down the wild Ottawa, and climbed upon
A rocky pinnacle, which in the glow
Of boyhood he had loved, called OUISEAU.
Proudly he stood there, listening to the roar
Of Rapids sounding, sounding evermore.

XV.

All else was silence, save the dreary sound
Of woodcock "pecking on the hollow tree,"
Or dry brush crackling from the sudden bound
Of startled deer, that snorts and halts to see,
Then onward o'er the leaf-encumbered ground
Through his green world of beauty, ever free :
Such was the scene—no white man's chimney nigh.
And joy sat plumed in the young warrior's eye.

XVI.

No white man's axe his hunting ground had marred :
The primal grandeur of the solemn woods,
When Summer all her golden gates unbarred,
And hung voluptuous o'er the shouting floods,
Or when white Winter gave the rich reward,
All suited with his uncorrupted moods,
For all was built, voiced, roofed with sun and cloud.
By the Great Spirit unto whom he bowed.

XVII.

The gray of morn was edging into white,
And down ROCK-OUISEAU the Indian passed.
Like a thin shadow ; soon the rosy light
Lay on the maple leaf, and dew drops cast
A lustrous charm on many a mossy height,
And squirrels broke out in chatter, as the blast
Swayed the tall pine tops where they leaped, and made
Grand organ-music in the green-wood shade.

XVIII.

Again the Indian comes, [some years have rolled].
Down the wild Ottawa, and stands upon
His boyhood haunt, and with an eye still bold
Looks round, and sighs for glories that are gone.
For all is changed, except the Fall that told
And tells its Maker still, and OUISEAU.
Sadly he leans against an evening sky,
Transfigured in its ebb of rosy dye !

XIX.

He sees a City there : the blazing forge,
The mason's hammer on the shaping stone,
Great wheels along the stream revolving large,
And swift machinery's whirr, and click, and groan,
And the fair bridge that spans the yawning gorge,
Which drinks the spray of Chaudiere, leaping prone,
And spires of silver hue, and belfry's toll ;
All strike, like fifty knives, the Red Man's soul !

XX.

Wide the arena of the open space,
Where broods the City, like a mighty bird,
And the red Spectre from his rock can trace
Her flock of villages, where lately stirred
The bear and wolf, tenacious of their place,
And where the wild cat with her kittens purred,
Now, while the folds of eve invest the land,
What myriad lights flash out on every hand.

XXI.

The dead day's glory, interwove with brown,
Has wrapped the watcher on OUISEAU ROCK,
And o'er him hangs bright Hesper, like a crown,
As if the hand of Destiny would mock
His soul's eclipse and sorrow-sculptured frown ;
Thick as wild pigeons, dusky memories flock
O'er the wide wind-fall of his fated race,
And thus he murmured to his native place :

XXII.

" Our woods are gone, slain by the white man's hand,
And piled in heaps to glut the fiend of fire,
The coward ox has bowed to his command,
And bore the slavish yoke through snow and mire ;
And far away—I scarce can understand—
Rush fiery buffaloes, as if in ire,
Dragging great wigwams o'er an iron path,
Which soundeth like a far off tempest's wrath.

XXIII

" Friend of my youth, OUISEAU HEIGHT, adieu !
No more shall I revisit thee, no more
Gaze from thy summit on the upper blue,
And listen to the rapid's battle-roar ;
I go, my elder brother, to pursue
The Elk's great shadow on a distant shore,
Where Nature, still unwounded, wears her charms,
And calls me, like a mother, to her arms."

XXIV

Is that poetical? Appollo nods,
And some in cushioned chairs have gravely said
That savage life is happier by all odds,
Than civilized society, well bred ; *
Just let the sages try it. By the gods,
I think I see them blanketed and fed
On the raw buttock of a grizzly bear,
And sleeping on the snow in open air.

XXV

For my part, give me " bread and cheese,"—and more,
The wine of knowledge pressed from every age,
And well-filled honeycombs of bardic lore,
Rare sweet'ner of my earthly pilgrimage ;
But, lest my audience vote me down a bore,
From length of wind, and hiss me off the stage,
I make my bow, and trust I've nothing said
Unworthy of a Briton's heart and head.

* Rousseau, among others, maintained this sophism in a prize essay, and defended it against all Europe for many years.

